

BLACK-NAPED TERN *STERNA SUMATRANA* IN MADAGASCAR

The Black-naped *Sterna sumatrana* breeds from Aldabra atoll in the western Indian ocean to Samoa in the Pacific (Harrison 1983). In the western half of the Indian Ocean, it has bred on several islands in the Seychelles archipelago, including Aldabra (up to 70 pairs, the largest concentration in the Seychelles) and Farquhar (Feare 1984, Stoddart 1984). There are approximately ten records from the African mainland, mostly cyclone-blown individuals on the coast of the Mozambique channel, in the period January–April (Ginn *et al.* 1989). There are no published records of the species from either Madagascar or the Comoro islands (*contra* Harrison 1983; Louette 1988, Langrand 1990) although Louette (1988) speculates that they must occur as they breed as close to the Comores as Aldabra, and Langrand (1990) included the species as one that was likely to occur.

With this in mind it is perhaps fitting that I observed a single adult Black-naped Tern at Sedradroa, 10 km north of Maroalika, Mahajanga province, Madagascar (45°10'E, 15°58'S) on 4 February 1993. It was with a group of other terns including Lesser-crested Terns *Sterna bengalensis*, roosting on the beach, where I observed it at a range of 10 m. A few days earlier, a tropical depression had passed the region from the north; it seems likely that the Black-naped Tern had been blown in on the accompanying winds. The bird was highly distinctive, being of medium size (for a tern; about the same size or slightly smaller than a Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*) and completely white save a pale grey wash over the mantle and wings, a very pale pink wash on the breast and a black line from the bill around the back of the neck.

References:

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AGAIN: THE ENGLISH NAME OF *GALLICOLUMBA STAIRII*

The English name of the ground-dove *Gallicolumba stairii* has been discussed controversially, whenever it has been mentioned in recent times. Even authors, who probably have never seen this bird in the